New York Meeting Friday To Protest Post Office Attack On 'Militant'

Will Rally Support to Help Challenge P. O. Order in Court

"No return to the witchhunts of 1917-1918! No government blackout for freedom of speech! Protect the free press!"

These are the slogans under which the Civil Rights Defense Committee is holding a mass meeting on Friday night, March 26, in protest against the recent Post Office order revoking the second-class mailing of *The Militant*.

The meeting — which will begin at 8:15 P. M. at Manhattan Center, 311 West 34th Street, near Eighth Avenue, New York — has been called not only to protest the first attack on an anti-fascist labor paper since the war began, but also to mobilize support in behalf of *The Militant's* announced intention of contesting the Post Office order in the courts.

Speaking at the meeting will be a number of well-known representatives of labor and liberal organizations:

Clifford Forster, for the American Civil Liberties Union, which has labelled the Post Office attack as "the gravest threat to freedom of the press that has thus far arisen in this war."

Layle Lane, member of the National Committee of the Negro March-On-Washington Movement and former Vice-President of the American Federation of Teachers.

Albert Goldman, attorney for The Militant and the late Leon Trotsky.

Louis Nelson, manager of Knitgoods Workers Local 155 of the ILGWU, AFL.

John Finerty, representing the Workers Defense League, who was attorney for Odell Waller, Tom Mooney and Sacco and Vanzetti.

Emanuel Garrett, editor of the weekly, Labor Action, which has also denounced the Post Office ruling against The Militant.

George Novack, national secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, who will act as chairman at the meeting.

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War Labor Board Flatly Rejects AFL-CIO Request For Higher Wages

Anti-Labor Drive Spurs Formation Of A Labor Party

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

Several events of the past week have thrown light on the forces which are steadily driving organized labor toward independent political action.

On March 14 the Greater Detroit and Wayne County CIO Industrial Union Council held a political action conference in Masonic Temple. Over 900 delegates were present. Allan Haywood, national CIO vice-president; R. J. Thomas, UAW president; August Scholle, Michigan CIO president; and George Addes, UAW secretary-treasurer, were the principal speakers.

These speakers presented an officially-endorsed six-point plan for the organization of political action by CIO union locals:

CIO POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

1. That a political action committee be established in each local.

2. That these committees be coordinated by Congressional districts.

3. That delegates be selected from the districts to act in conjunction with the State CIO in Lansing in obtaining desirable legislation.

4. That delegates be sent to Washington to act in conjunction with the CIO Washington groups.

5. That the CIO work cooperatively with the AFL, the Railroad Brotherhoods and other unions to abolish anti-labor legislation.

6. That the executive board of the Wayne County CIO council appoint a committee to work with and co-ordinate the activities of the political action committees established in the locals.

According to Detroit press reports, the speakers stated that the political action committees will break down membership in each union local by residence, with individuals assigned in each ward, precinct and district to work for favorable legislation.

"ALL POLITICAL QUESTIONS NOW"

Last October, in his speech to the Tenth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, James P. Cannon pointed out that "The fight for the smallest economic questions become of necessity a political question" for the workers under wartime conditions. **The CIO leaders involuntarily confirmed this fact at the conference when they declared that their plan for political action had been adopted as a means of regaining ground lost when the unions gave up the right to strike for the duration of the war and as a means of protecting social gains.**

These leaders are being compelled by force of circumstance to acknowledge the necessity for political action by the trade unions. They do so partially to cover up their own betrayal of the workers' interests when they handed over the strike weapon to Roosevelt and the bosses in exchange for a few unfulfilled promises. But they are also impelled to enter the political arena by the government's control over all important issues affecting the working class today from wages to food-rationing.

THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE

The immediate cause of their political activity, however, is the mounting offensive against labor sponsored by the ultra-reactionaries in the Democratic and Republican parties. These labor-haters are not satisfied with binding the labor movement hand and foot, as Roosevelt with the aid of his labor lieutenants, has managed to do since Pearl Harbor. While labor appears prostrate and helpless, they see their chance to cut the trade unions to pieces and prevent them from recovering any of their pre-war powers.

The betrayals of the two capitalist parties are so flagrant that even their labor accomplices have become alarmed and are threatening to break with them — unless they reform. R. J. Thomas implied that the CIO might not support Mayor Jeffries of Detroit for another term. Jeffries smashed the city transport workers' strike last summer and victimized its active leaders.

Now, says Thomas, "We have a man at the head of our city government who, even though he

(Continued on page 2)

Trotsky Sequence Proved Frameup Aim Of Movie

No matter what the final version of the motion picture, "Mission to Moscow," will show when it is presented on the screen a few weeks from now, it has been definitely established that the purpose of its authors, advisers and producers was to film the biggest frameup lie in the history of motion pictures.

Warner Brothers, the Hollywood company which produced the picture from the book by ex-Ambassador Joseph E. Davies, itself provided the proof last week when it admitted that it had inserted into the picture a scene showing Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Russian Revolution and founder of the Red Army, meeting with the Nazi von Ribbentrop in the German Embassy in Oslo, Norway!

The Davies' book and film give the official Stalinist version of the infamous Moscow Trials of 1936-37, which were staged to discredit and eliminate many of the working class opponents of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR, and which were rejected by world labor opinion as crude frameups. The trials were filled with all kinds of false charges against Trotsky, all of which were later irrefutably disproved — **but neither the trials, the Davies' book nor the worst Stalinist slanderers ever dared charge Trotsky with having met von Ribbentrop.**

ONE BETTER THAN THE TRIAL SLANDERS

Nevertheless, the Stalinist authors of the movie scenario and the Hollywood whitewashers of the bloody Stalin regime decided to go the Moscow Trials one better and to insert this scene. After all, what is one more lie in a picture full of falsification?

But apparently somebody in Hollywood acquainted with the official Stalinist lies about the trials saw this scene and pointed out that since it was an easily exposed falsification, its inclusion would do more to hurt than to help the purpose of the picture. Consequently, according to the most recent reports, it has been eliminated.

The report that the picture would show Trotsky meeting with von Ribbentrop was first printed in the New York daily, PM, on March 17. The historical truth of this scene was immediately challenged in a letter to PM by Daniel Bell, managing editor of the New Leader, Social Democratic newspaper.

WITHDRAWN, BUT NOT REPUDIATED

On March 19 PM printed Bell's protest, together with an answer and a movie still from "Mission to Moscow," showing actors supposed to represent Trotsky and von Ribbentrop. PM's answer said in part:

"We asked our reporter (in Hollywood) to recheck and he reported back yesterday by wire this statement from Warner Bros.: 'We had ample authority for truth of this scene. This week, however, it was decided to drop scene since Trotsky's dealings amply exposed in trial sequence'."

In other words, the scene was so obviously phoney that the producers cut it out — but they still pretend to stand by its "truth." They are careful not to reveal who was the "authority" for it. **That's not necessary when they can slander Trotsky and other Bolshevik co-workers of Lenin in the "trial sequence" —** for which they at least have the "authority" of Stalin and the GPU and the "revelations" of Davies four years after the trials, in 1941 when Hitler's attack again made Stalin into an ally of Washington.

CONTINUE TO PROTEST!

Protests against the film must be reaching sizeable proportions. On March 14 **The Worker** said that the picture is being attacked "by a small clique of Trotskyite and Social-Democrat supporters of the Hitler agents, Erlich and Alter. But let them rave — nobody will listen to them."

Three days later, however, the same paper admitted that Warner Brothers "are being showered with a stream" of protests and appealed to its readers to send letters to Warner Brothers "congratulating them for a faithful rendering of an epoch-making book."

Warner Brothers' intentions in producing the picture, and the State Department's aim in authorizing the scenario, have been made perfectly clear by the episode of the Trotsky-von Ribbentrop sequence. Opponents of the Stalin-Davies-Hollywood school of falsification should continue to send protests to Lowell Mellett, Office of War Information Film Bureau, Washington, D. C., and to Warner Brothers, Hollywood, Calif.

Roosevelt Enters Into Mine Fight

Indicates He Will Oppose Demands of The Miners Union

President Roosevelt intervened in the mine-wage negotiations this week, asking the mine operators to agree to continue their present contract with the United Mine Workers beyond April 1, with the understanding that wage readjustments when finally agreed on would be retroactive to that date. The continuation of the contract on this basis, demanded by the union and previously rejected by the mine operators, although it is a customary procedure in mine negotiations, represents an initial victory for the UMW.

But in the same telegram making this request, Roosevelt clearly indicated his intention of fighting the mine workers' demand for a $2-a-day wage increase.

ROOSEVELT'S STAND

"The dispute", he said, "must be settled **like any other labor dispute** under the national no-strike agreement of Dec. 26, 1941. . . that is, by collective bargaining, conciliation and **final determination, if necessary, by the National War Labor Board. . .**

"If any wage adjustments are made they must, of course, be made in accordance with the act of Oct. 2, 1942, and executive order No. 9250. . ."

But the miners had already denounced the War Labor Board as "a court packed against labor" which had already prejudged and decided against the UMW demands. And they had already stated their opposition to "the act of Oct. 2, 1942, and executive order No. 9250," which froze wages in the vise of the WLB's "Little Steel" formula, as a policy designed to "fatten industry and starve labor."

Almost simultaneously with Roosevelt's telegram upholding the authority of the WLB in the mine negotiations, that body was meeting on March 22 and deciding not to change its "Little Steel" formula by an iota. Roosevelt's Economic Stabilizer Byrnes has already publicly announced

(Continued on page 2)

WLB Votes To Maintain Its 15% Wage-Freezing Formula

By E. R. Frank

At a stormy session last Monday the War Labor Board flatly rejected the demand of the AFL and CIO representatives that the "Little Steel" formula be junked and that wage increases be allowed taking into consideration "a new realistic figure based upon the actual cost of living to the worker."

The War Labor Board also rejected the demand of the AFL and CIO representatives for the reopening of the packinghouse and the West Coast aircraft cases, in both of which the Board had denied wage raises requested by low-paid workers.

The four members representing the "public" united with the four representatives of industry on Monday to make it clear that the Board would fight to the end to keep the workers chained to its formula preventing wage raises over 15% above the January 1941 level. By its own action the WLB thus confirmed John L. Lewis' description of it, at the current coal negotiations in New York City, as "a court packed against labor."

The demands of the AFL and CIO representatives that wages be unfrozen, which precipitated the crisis in the Board, can be traced directly to the present coal controversy and the stand of the United Mine Workers.

PRESSURE ON AFL AND CIO LEADERS

The Lewis denunciation of the WLB and the wage-freezing "Little Steel" formula, coming on the heels of the Board's decision in the west Coast aircraft case, subjected the AFL and CIO representatives to the ever-growing pressure of their own rank-and-file members and the fear that all moral leadership would pass over to Lewis if they did not take a lead in voicing the demands of the American workers for wage increases to meet soaring living costs.

In fact, this pressure resulted on Monday in the first admission by the AFL and CIO spokesmen that the "Little Steel" formula was a wage-freezing device. Hitherto they have aided and abetted the administration in maintaining the pretense that the "Little Steel" formula was only wage "stabilization" instituted in the interest of the workers.

But the government's determined attitude and the pressure of the industrialists have again for the moment succeeded in bulldozing the timid "labor statesmen" of the AFL and CIO. Confronted by the barrage of the industry members and their public relations counsel, the "public" members, the labor leaders declared that they would abide by "the democratic majority." However, even here, they felt it necessary to declare that they were going along with the majority decision only "for the time being" and that they would keep up their fight against the WLB's wage-freezing policy.

FIGHT NOT OVER YET

The "time being" will unquestionably be of short duration. The next crisis that will occur in the coal negotiations now taking place in New York will again precipitate a major crisis in the Board. Already the national spotlight is on Lewis and workers from coast to coast are eagerly watching the developments in the coal negotiations. The War Labor Board has become a discredited agency and its labor members are increasingly forced to apologize for remaining on it. However, these labor representatives, by their momentary retreat in Monday's session of the WLB, have again relinquished moral leadership into the hands of John L. Lewis and the mine workers.

The crisis of the War Labor Board is not over. It has merely been postponed—and that for a matter of weeks. The new threats of repressive anti-labor legislation, arising in Congress instead of dampening the movement, will only serve as an additional irritant to spur the labor movement forward and to strengthen the demand that the "Little Steel" formula be scrapped.

Giraud Disfranchises Jews As Well As Arabs

By BETTY KUEHN

Two mutually contradictory explanations of Giraud's March 14 speech at Algiers are being handed out by the press of the "democracies."

On the one hand the capitalist press praises Giraud's belated rejection of Vichy as a real turn to "democracy."

On the other hand, a dispatch from Algeria in the March 22 *N. Y. Times* says:

"Those who call for 'full democracy' do not understand the situation here."

Giraud's speech, insists the March 15 *N. Y. Times*, gave Frenchmen "new confidence in their great tradition of 'liberty, equality and fraternity'."

Yet, except for two or three dismissals, the whole Vichy gang continues to rule, headed by Peyrouton, civil chief of North Africa. Peyrouton is the former Vichy Minister of the Interior, who, in an interview with the French press in November, 1940, stated:

"My enemies accuse me of being a Hitlerite; I am proud of it."

One promised "concession" to democracy is the *possible* future resignation of Nogues, Governor-General of Morocco. He is the gentleman who at the time of the landing of the Allied troops on Nov. 7 in Algeria, ordered the arrest of hundreds of Jews in Morocco because of their "intense pro-United Nations feelings," while still others were seized in Tunisia where they were accused of acting as "American agents."

But, even if Nogues goes, something worse has replaced him.

THE CREMIEUX LAW

The American press hailed Giraud's speech as formally restoring the "democratic" laws of the Third Republic.

But the Cremieux law was one of the laws of the Third Republic. Giraud announced its abrogation.

The Cremieux law of 1870 gave Algerian Jews the right to become French citizens automatically without going through certain steps required of the Arabs. With the abolition of this law, both Jews and Arabs must now comply with rigid educational and property requirements which have kept practically all the seven million Arabs disfranchised.

Thus the "end of all racial discrimination" proclaimed by Giraud in reality means lowering the Jews to the level of the miserably exploited colonial masses, rather than raising the status of the Arabs to that of the Jews under the Third Republic.

Giraud and the French capital-

(Continued on page 3)

STALINISTS LIE ABOUT UAW STAND ON SPEEDUP

By PHILIP BLAKE

The Communist Party is so intent on its current campaign to speedup the workers through the institution of the "incentive pay" system that it does not hesitate to print the most brazen kind of lies about the stand taken on this question by the trade union movement.

As reported in last week's issue of *The Militant*, the international executive board of the CIO United Auto Workers met in Columbus, Ohio and voted on March 10 to oppose the speedup-"incentive pay" schemes being pushed by the employers, the Rickenbackers and the Stalinists.

Yet the Stalinist Daily Worker last week had the nerve not only to print a story pretending that the UAW executive board had come out for the "incentive pay" plan, but also an editorial congratulating the board for adopting such a "constructive policy."

Here is the truth about what actually happened:

WHAT HAPPENED

The labor reporter of the *Detroit News*, covering the UAW board meeting in Columbus, on March 10 sent his paper a report which began as follows:

"The United Automobile Workers (CIO) executive board today unanimously reaffirmed its long standing opposition to the use of incentive pay plans in the automobile industry."

The story then went on to quote R. J. Thomas, UAW president, as saying for the board: "We have definitely committed ourselves to discourage the institution of piecework even as a war-time measure."

In addition to adopting this general categoric decision to "discourage" such speedup plans, the board adopted a resolution to implement its decision by keeping close check on all speedup-piecework plans brought up in local unions and plants. This resolution, introduced by UAW vice-president Walter P. Reuther, who the *Detroit News* reporter calls the board's "most outspoken critic of piece-work," said in part:

"In plants where incentive systems have or have not been in existence and the membership in such plants is desirous of having an incentive plan, such plan must be approved by the international executive board and must conform to the requirements and

(Continued on page 2)

John G. Wright to Speak On Civil War in Yugoslavia

"The Civil War In Yugoslavia" is the topic of the timely speech to be given by John G. Wright, well-known Trotskyist writer and lecturer, at the next session of the Sunday Open Forum, March 28, 8 P. M. at 116 University Pl., New York.

The background of the civil war in Yugoslavia has already been sketched in a series of articles by Wright recently concluded in *The Militant*. In his lecture Sunday Wright will give an analysis of the more basic problems of the Yugoslav conflict — the class character of the internal struggle between the Mikhailovitch forces and the Partisans, the nature of international connections with the struggle, the relation of the Yugoslav war to the defense of the Soviet Union.

The Sunday Open Forum is held regularly each week under the auspices of the New York School of Social Science.

CONGRESS BILLS SEEK TO RAISE PRICES AND TO INTIMIDATE OR CRIPPLE UNIONS

The House of Representatives on March 19 adopted the Pace bill, which revises the parity price formula of farm products and which would have the effect of raising food prices by almost 10%. The Senate has already passed a similar measure, the Bankhead bill, so the danger is great that the two houses will compromise on the measures, both of which will mean a drastic cut in the living standards of the workers whose wages have been frozen.

"WORK OR FIGHT"

On March 17 the House Naval Committee voted favorably on the Johnson "absenteeism" bill, known as a "work or fight" measure and requiring requests to draft boards for deferments of workers to be accompanied by their "absentee" records. It also instructs the war contractors to supply the Labor Department with the names of workers absent without prior authorization. Effect of its adoption would be to place a powerful weapon against militants in the hands of the employers.

The Austin-Wadsworth labor draft bill has already received the support of the War Department. Roosevelt has asked that no action be taken on it now because he does not think that it is needed yet. This bill would endanger the operation of union contracts and would nullify the closed shop.

The Hobbs bill, which is scheduled for an early vote in the House, is allegedly directed against "racketeering;" but its language about protecting commerce against "interference by violence, threats, coercion or intimidation" could be interpreted by anti-labor courts to include legitimate union demands.

A new bill was introduced into the House last week by Representative Howard Smith of Virginia, veteran enemy of labor. This measure seeks to outlaw any union rule or practice or contract provision which in any way "interferes with the full utilization of the nation's manpower in the present war;" it would also prohibit foremen from belonging to unions. Smith himself commented that the bill was "pretty broad"—an admission that if it were passed almost any union activity could be included under it and the employers would be able in the name of "patriotism" to junk all the regulations and concessions gained by the unions in combatting the speedup, etc.

"EQUAL RIGHTS" BILL

The *CIO News* of March 22 reports that one of the anti-labor bills being most actively pushed at the present time is the so-called "Equal Rights" amendment which would deprive women workers of all protective legislation. This bill has been opposed by the AFL, the CIO, and the Railroad Brotherhoods, but because its backers pretend that it would give equality to women, many otherwise pro-labor people have been fooled into backing it.

Then there are the various tax bills. Nobody in Congress seems interested in tax legislation to place the burden on the wealthy and the corporations, which can really afford to pay; everybody in Congress does seems interested in increasing the burden on the masses; almost everyone in Congress agrees that heavy withholding taxes will be taken out of wages of all workers by about the middle of this year.

A Short History Of 'The Militant'

By HELEN RUSSELL

The year 1933 marked a turning point in the history of **The Militant.** Up until then this paper had been a theoretical organ directed primarily at the Communist Party, and attempting to bring it back to the program of international revolutionary socialism. But the Communist International sank deeper into the morass of bureaucratism, adventurism, and capitulation.

The German events of 1930-33, culminating in Hitler's seizure of power, graphically demonstrated that the Communist International was beyond reform and could never again lead the workers in the struggle for socialism. **A new instrument for this historic task had to be forged. And on Sept. 30, 1933 The Militant published the historic declaration of the National Committee of the Communist League of America (Opposition): "For a New Party and a New International."**

The Third or Communist International had turned into a brake upon the development of the workers; it had outlived its historic function. The necessities of the struggle for socialism required a new party and a new international based on the return to the principles of Marx, Engels and Lenin, which Stalin had completely betrayed. To build this new party and international became the primary task for **The Militant.**

As the editors put it, "With this issue (Oct. 7, 1933) **The Militant** begins to reflect the new course of the Communist League toward the building of a new party of Communism in America. Our aim is to transform **The Militant** from a propaganda organ intended mainly for Communists into a popular agitation paper appealing directly to the mass of American workers."

Articles on the great national strikes of 1933-36 figured prominently. To read the pages of **The Militant** for these years is to see unfold the history of the great growth of organized American labor. The country's basic industries — coal, auto, steel, etc. — were rocked by strikes. Entire cities, as was the case in Minneapolis, witnessed militant union struggles such as had not been seen before in the Western Hemisphere.

Labor was on the march and the picket line throughout the country, and The Militant was there with them. Numerous articles were front line dispatches from strikers themselves who saw that The Militant represented their interests. The reporting may have lacked the professional touch, but it bore the stamp of genuine working class struggle.

The Militant was not a mere onlooker but actively participated in labor's struggles. For instance, during the general hotel strike of New York in 1934, the paper came out three times a week with the latest strike developments. Leaders of the Trotskyist movement, among them James P. Cannon addressed the striking workers. **The Militant** also reflected the interests of the jobless workers, from the days of the Bonus Army down through the organization of powerful national unemployed organizations.

In the struggle to build a revolutionary socialist party and to unite all the revolutionary elements, the Trotskyist movement underwent a number of organizational changes. In 1934, the Communist League of America (Opposition) joined together with the American Workers Party headed by A. J. Muste to form the Workers Party of the United States. The **New Militant,** as the Party's organ was then called, continued the work and the tradition of its predecessor.

In 1936 when a leftward turn in the Socialist Party made that party the center of attraction for various left tendencies, the Workers Party decided to enter the ranks of the Socialist Party to build a united left-wing socialist movement. On June 6, 1936 the **New Militant** called on all revolutionary workers to join the Socialist Party, which had just broken with its reformist Old Guard wing.

Thus the publication of **The Militant** was suspended — but this was to prove only a temporary measure. Within the space of little more than a year, events resulted in the reappearance of the paper.

(Next week's installment in this series tracing the history of The Militant since 1928 will deal with developments between 1937 and U. S. entry into the second world war.)

For a Rising Scale of Wages to Meet Rising Living Costs

State Legislatures Offered Scores Of Anti-Labor Bills

Would Cripple Unions' Activities and Hamper Development of a Labor Party

The anti-labor drive in the state legislatures is beginning to bear fruit. Vicious bills to undermine the unions have already been passed in certain states, and many more are under consideration, with the danger great that they will be passed too.

The AFL pointed out last month that many of these state bills have been drawn up in almost identical language, and revealed that its backers include the anti-labor "Christian American Association" and the Associated Industries. Rickenbacker, the front man for the National Association of Manufacturers, and the reactionary Lee O'Daniel, poll tax Senator from Texas, have spoken before a large number of the state legislative bodies asking for the passage of anti-labor laws.

BILLS ADOPTED

In **KANSAS** last week the State Legislature adopted a bill requiring unions to submit financial reports annually to the Secretary of State, including payment of dues, fees and assessments; ordering the licensing of business agents; and banning "jurisdictional disputes."

The **ARKANSAS** House of Representatives has passed a bill punishing public assemblage near a plant on strike by prison terms of one to two years, and containing a clause against "threats of violence" which could easily be interpreted to prevent peaceful persuasion to join an organization. The Workers Defense League says that the bill was aimed not only against the unions in industry, but also against the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, active among the exploited sharecroppers and tenant farmers of the Mississippi Delta.

The lower house of the **TEXAS** Legislature has already passed a bill requiring the registration of unions and the filing of membership lists, financial statements and other data useful to anti-labor groups. Other Texas legislation would outlaw the closed shop and require that 75% of a union's income remain in the state.

CALIFORNIA legislation would ban the closed shop; require unions to incorporate under the civil code; abolish the checkoff as now instituted; make all union financial records public; require a vote by the members of a union on all expenditures over $50.

MASSACHUSETTS bills would require licensing of all unions, filing of financial accounts with the state, and the imposition of certain restrictions which would bar closed shop contracts. The CIO has pointed out that the licensing bill would enable employers to ask for revocation of a union's license just when a contract is being negotiated.

MICHIGAN, center of the powerful auto union, is also being offered a bill requiring incorporation of all unions.

OHIO bills would limit the closed shop, regulate union dues, and, as in so many states, require registration of unions and officers.

A bill in the **MISSOURI** State Senate would require union officials to be native-born, resident in the state at least five years, and the owner of real estate. And, of course, a yearly financial report by all unions.

THEY FEAR LABOR PARTY

A particularly interesting bill, which many state legislatures are now considering, is one which prohibits financial contributions by unions for political campaigns. Among others, the Michigan, Massachusetts, California, Texas, Minnesota and Kansas legislatures have such bills on their calendar.

This is a recognition by the capitalist politicians that anti-labor legislation can have the effect of turning the workers in the direction of independent political action. The creation of a labor party now would win allegiance from a large section of the union movement, and far-sighted reactionaries are trying to place obstacles in the path by making it illegal for unions to give financial support to a party of their own.

These laws would make it almost impossible to form a labor party. But an Independent Labor Party based on the unions and a fighting program would make it almost impossible for the reactionaries to pass their anti-labor bills—in Congress or in the state legislatures.

5 Vicious Bills Menace Unions In Minnesota

By JACK RANGER

MINNEAPOLIS, March 20. — Confronted with a barrage of anti-labor legislation similar in character to that being pushed in most state legislatures today, the Minnesota union movement has forced its reluctant leadership to call an emergency state convention to stem the union-smashing tide.

Some 750 delegates of the State Federation of Labor will meet tomorrow in St. Paul to consider the critical situation.

Taking full advantage of the slavish attitude of the union officialdom during this war period, the employers' organization and the Stassen administration in Minnesota are pressing for the passage of five vicious labor bills.

Four of the bills, ostensibly sponsored by farm producers' cooperatives, would accomplish the following: outlaw strikes against the state or any of its subdivisions; take away civil service rights of employees so striking; prevent any person ever convicted of a felony from serving as a union official; prevent a union in one city from representing workers in another city; bar all financial contributions from one union to a sister union;

Require all unions to register with the Secretary of State, giving names of all union officials, detailed financial statements, details of all contracts, and "such other information as the Secretary of State may consider necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act"; lay down criminal penalties for non-compliance with the above bill; give the secretary of state a dictatorship over the union movement, permitting him to certify or withdraw certification from any union (even the capitalist papers admit this measure would give the secretary of state "life and death powers over union";

Define robbery and extortion so as to embrace the ordinary activities of unions; condemn all members of a union as "conspirators" if one union member became involved in violence; define a union demand for wage increases as "extortion."

THE STASSEN BILL

The fifth anti-labor bill, the only one with which Governor Stassen is publicly identified, would make it a criminal offense for one union to aid another. Anyone donating food to strikers would be guilty of "conspiracy." It would bar unions from contributing to political funds. It would outlaw the sympathy strike and the secondary boycott.

The passage of any one of these bills would deal a crippling blow to organized labor in Minnesota. In the words of Judge Padway, who has been brought to Minnesota by the State Federation of Labor to lobby against the anti-labor proposals, the legislature "might as well outlaw labor organizations altogether as to all but remove their reasons for being."

Just as in 1939, when Stassen put over his Slave Labor Law during his first administration, labor's enemies are maintaining the fiction that it is the farm organizations who are chiefly pressing for passage of anti-labor laws.

The truth is, as Padway told the House and Senate labor committees, that the Minnesota anti-labor bills are almost identical with a number of such bills introduced in various state legislatures now in session. They originate with the boss organizations, who are using the backward farm leaders to pull their chestnuts out of the fire.

STASSEN'S METHOD

Back in 1939, as today, the Associated Industries and other boss groups were working through Stassen to cripple the union movement through legislative action. Then as now Stassen utilized so-called "farm" leaders to front for him in his anti-labor drive.

Yesterday's Minneapolis *Star-Journal* tells how Stassen on the eve of the State Federation of Labor emergency conference "bluntly" told the farm organizations he "would not stand for their far-reaching proposals," and only wanted to pass his own anti-labor bill which is described as "moderate." The paper repeats the lie that "the governor leans toward the unions."

But Robert Olson, the very conservative president of the State Federation of Labor, has now had to admit that provisions of the governor's bill "are the most vicious of any bill before the legislature."

LABOR LEADERS AND STASSEN

The Stalinist leaders of the state CIO and a majority of the AFL leaders supported Stassen in the 1942 elections. Ever since the fight between the Minneapolis drivers and Tobin (during which Stassen supported Tobin by refusing to permit the drivers to vote on union affiliation), the labor conservatives have tried to protect Stassen and present him as labor's friend.

Now the AFL leaders are whining that Stassen isn't playing fair with them. The St. Paul *Union Advocate* and the Duluth *Labor World* are charging their respective movements with having supported Stassen in the last election. The Minneapolis *Labor Review* for March 11 contains a front-page editorial on "A Political Shell Game":

"The dealer in this dubious game is Governor Stassen. It is not the first time that he has manipulated the shell and the peas in such a political bamboozle.... The first time it was the so-called Labor Relations Act, more widely known as the Stassen Slave Law that he put over," etc.

During the fight of the Minneapolis drivers against the Tobin machine in 1941, Local 544-CIO warned the union movement that if Stassen-Roosevelt succeeded in smashing progressive unionism in Minneapolis, they would move further to cripple all unions. During that historic fight the *Labor Review* didn't once criticize Governor Stassen for his vile role in denying democracy to the drivers.

The Minneapolis Central Labor Union on March 10 adopted resolutions condemning Stassen and his labor bills. One resolution states that Stassen, in voicing liberal sentiments before the 1941 AFL convention, was "a wolf in sheep's clothing." In a crack at Tobin, the CLU condemned AFL international unions for "fostering Stassen's presidential aspirations."

LABOR PARTY NEEDED

Even conservative AFL leaders in Minneapolis are now stating that "What we need is a labor party."

At a conference Monday night AFL union officials in Minneapolis held a special meeting looking toward some form of independent labor political action in the coming city elections.

The meeting was disrupted, however, by Republican and Democratic politicians who, in their role of union leaders, effectively prevented the adoption of any concrete measure for establishing a labor party.

Nevertheless, the pressure from the union ranks for a labor party is mounting daily, as it becomes obvious to more and more workers that only through their own party can they defend their interests against the bosses and the boss parties.

Roosevelt Enters Into Mine Fight

(Continued from page 1)

that "there must be no further increases in wages beyond the Little Steel formula."

OPERATORS HAPPY

Roosevelt's telegram, therefore, was greeted with joy by the mine operators. It fits in very well with their own strategy of sitting back, doing nothing, granting no concessions to the mine union, dumping the responsibility of rejecting the miners' demands into the lap of the government, while letting their agents in Congress shriek and threaten all kinds of dire consequences against the miners and the labor movement as a whole.

Former Senator Edward R. Burke, spokesman for the southern coal operators, announced that he would recommend acceptance by his group "because he felt that under the legislation and executive orders mentioned by the President **'there can be no increases for the miners.'** . . . He did not think the Labor Board would approve any increases. . . in view of its action in Washington yesterday affirming the 'Little Steel' wage formula." (**N. Y. Times,** March 23.) The northern operators also agreed to accept Roosevelt's proposal.

LABOR'S FIGHT

Lewis has already stated that the miners are opposed to putting their fate into the hands of the WLB. The treacherous act of the AFL and CIO members of the WLB, who while putting up a verbal fight against the Board's wage-freezing policies, continue to prop up the Board whose stated function is to continue wage-freezing, places the United Mine Workers in a difficult position and again imposes on them the necessity of breaking through the steel cage erected around them and all of U. S. labor. But it is obvious from the proceedings of the Scranton Tri-District Convention as well as from Lewis's speech in New York that the miners are determined to do just that.

The miners have counted and unquestionably continue to count on the fact that their drive for higher wages has aroused sympathy and wholehearted support on the part of workers in all the unions.

The debt of gratitude which all militants feel toward the mine union for having taken the lead in exposing the rotten character of the government labor agencies and for having shown how to halt the retreat of the labor movement should be translated into action on the part of every local union, openly backing the UMW's stand and pledging complete support to its struggle.

Anti-Union Drive Spurs Formation Of A Labor Party

(Continued from page 1)

was supported by labor time and again, is against time-and-a-half pay for the sixth day in the 48-hour week." Yet, despite all Jeffries' blows against the workers who put him in office with CIO support, Thomas has no more to say than: "It is time for our local unions to study this particular situation."

TOBIN WARNS . . .

Further evidence of the reaction of labor officialdom to the anti-labor drive was provided by Teamsters International President Daniel J. Tobin in an article in the latest issue of **The Teamsters Journal** entitled: "Democratic Party Forgets How Hungry It Used to Be." Tobin was chairman of the labor division of the National Democratic Committee in the campaigns of 1932, 1936, 1940. He is a frequent visitor at the White House. He obtained the Roosevelt administration's aid in the prosecution against the Local 544-CIO teamster leaders of Minneapolis who were convicted, together with Socialist Workers Party leaders, in the federal courts in November, 1941.

Today Tobin has to warn the Democratic Party he has served so slavishly that it must stop "crucifying" the trade union movement!

Tobin asserted that many labor leaders who had supported the Democratic party in the last three elections now feel that they are "being sold down the river" by the party they helped put into power. These men, he said, now say that: "If we are going to be crucified, let us be crucified by those who don't claim to be our friends."

If such yelps of distress can come from case-hardened bureaucrats of the Tobin type, what must be the sentiments among the rank and file workers in the trade unions who don't want to be crucified, either by those who claim to be their friends, like Roosevelt, or by confessed enemies like the Southern poll taxers at the head of Roosevelt's Democratic party?

THE FORCES AT PLAY

The CIO and AFL leaders may protest against the crimes of the Democratic-Republican anti-labor conspirators and threaten them with reprisal at the next elections. But they fear to break clearly and cleanly with the capitalist politicians. They hesitate to take the road to independent political organization. At the same time they are being pushed toward some sort of independent political action while they maintain their connections and work for further collaboration with the capitalist parties.

In Detroit, for example, it appears that the unions are preparing to lay a basis for their own political organization and activity in the wards precincts and Congressional districts. This kind of political organization can easily make Detroit's CIO unions the most powerful single force in local and state politics.

But these moves are being taken in the most disguised, timid, half-hearted and ineffective fashion. They propose to enter the arena of labor party politics backwards. Without its real name, without any militant pro-labor program, without a banner, without a state or national organization. The official leadership wants to keep all lines of retreat open for support of Roosevelt's re-election in 1944 and for deals with lesser candidates of the capitalist parties.

The militants in the CIO and AFL do not, we are sure, share this timidity of their leaders. They will not hesitate to throw over the capitalist parties once the opportunity for real labor politics is presented to them. They are beginning to realize more and more that the trade unions need their Independent Labor Party to halt the anti-labor offensive of the bosses and their Democratic-Republican agents.

STALINISTS LIE ABOUT UAW STAND ON SPEEDUP

(Continued from page 1)

guarantees approved by the international union before such plans may become effective."

Then, says the *Detroit News* story, "the board set up a committee of four to write comprehensive regulations for locals to follow in considering incentive pay." Reuther was selected as one of the four on the committee.

STALINIST DISTORTION

To any honest person the above story makes the facts perfectly clear. The UAW executive board opposed the "incentive pay" plan, decided to discourage its adoption by the local unions, and even took steps to make sure that those locals which still wanted to institute the plan would have to "conform to the requirements and guarantees approved by the international union before such plans may become effective."

But honesty and Stalinism have little in common. Falsification is only a small obstacle to an organization ready to sell the interests of the workers down the river in the interests of "national unity."

So the Stalinists, whose speed-up plans have been under attack in a number of auto union centers, got around the stand of the UAW executive board in Columbus by just not printing anything about it. Instead they waited a whole week until the national office of the UAW had made public the list of provisions, drawn up by the sub-committee of four which would have to be conformed with by those local unions wanting to adopt "incentive pay" plans despite the executive board's opposition to them.

Then, on March 18 the *Daily Worker* ran a story listing the seven provisions, adopted by the sub-committee of four. The first of these provisions warned that no "incentive pay" plan could be applied until it has received the approval of the local union or plant unit "and of the international union."

The Stalinists, well-aware of what had happened at the Columbus meeting, nevertheless dared to begin this story listing the seven provisions by saying that the UAW had announced "approval of incentive pay as a measure for increased production and pay envelopes." And over the story the Daily Worker carried this headline: "AUTO UNION BACKS INCENTIVE PAY AS MEASURE TO BOOST PRODUCTION; Adopts Policy for New Contracts."

WHAT ARE THEY AFTER?

Why do the Stalinists resort to such easily-detected falsification?

Because only by lying can they hope to squirm out of the very embarrassing position into which they were placed by their campaign to reintroduce the old speedup-stretchout-piecework system that it took the trade unions so many years to abolish. They went too far out on a limb on this issue, with the result that they received only the contempt and well-earned abuse of the informed militants in the auto centers. Now they hope, by distorting the position of the UAW executive board, to make it appear that the Stalinist position is very much like that of this important union.

The Stalinists have no intention of discontinuing their campaign for the speedup, however. In fact, they intend to push it harder than ever, acting behind the cover of the seven-point provisions designed to safeguard the locals from the worst consequences of the "incentive pay" schemes. This was demonstrated by the *Daily Worker* editorial of March 20, which hails the UAW seven-point provisions as "a constructive policy." The militants in the various union locals must remain on guard against the anti-labor policies of the Stalinists.

Sunday Open Forum Hears Charles On Fight Against Rising Prices

"The living standards of the masses are under constant attack today because profits are sacred under capitalism in wartime as in peace, and because the government agrees with the employers that their profits must be maintained and increased, no matter what happens.

This was the keynote of the lecture delivered by C. Charles last Sunday evening before the Open Forum of the New York School of Social Science. He stated it succinctly, and went ahead to prove it in detail.

He showed that the employers are ready to let the crops rot on the ground, that they are prepared to slaughter milk cows, that they are willing to create shortages or intensify existing shortages, that they don't hesitate a minute to encourage the formation of black markets—unless their rate of profit is maintained.

And he demonstrated too that almost every time the employers exert pressure on the government, every time they resort to blackmail and intimidation, the government gives way because it too is committed to the belief that profits come first and foremost.

"But the capitalists," he continued "play no useful function in society. They take in the profits, but they produce nothing. The workers can get along without them in the same way that a dog can get along without fleas."

The way out of the present dilemma of the workers,—whose incomes are frozen by the War Labor Board, diminished by higher prices both open and hidden, and then drastically cut by the highest tax rates in the nation's history—is to take control of prices and rationing and distribution and production out of the hands of the employers and their government agents and to put them under the direction of mass consumers' committees whose aim would be to preserve not profits but the living standards of the workers and dirt farmers and lower middle class.

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The Negro Struggle

"LABOR WITH A WHITE SKIN CANNOT EMANCIPATE ITSELF WHERE LABOR WITH A BLACK SKIN IS BRANDED" — KARL MARX.

By Albert Parker

If This Is Progress —

The United Press reported last week that a women and her father in Corpus Christi, Texas, had been found guilty and sentenced to prison for keeping a Negro as a slave on their farm. Neighbors testified that the Negro had been kept in a chicken coop and was whipped with chains when he disobeyed; once he had tried to escape, but he was captured and "afraid" to make another attempt.

Well, it's good to see that there is something for which oppressors of the Negro masses can be punished by law. For even though it's almost 80 years since the abolition of chattel slavery, the Negro remains oppressed in so many fields that it is still a novelty to find laws operating to protect any of his rights.

* * *

Almost 80 years since the Civil War, and it still seems that there will have to be some kind of revolution before an anti-lynch bill is adopted by the government.

Year in and year out, Democratic or Republican administration, the anti-lynch bill gets kicked around and buried in committee. This years' bill, introduced less than three months ago, has already been swallowed up by one of the House committees and it will take the signature on a discharge petition by a majority of members of the House before the bill will even be brought up for a vote.

* * *

Twenty-five years after the end of the first "war for democracy," Negro and labor organizations are still trying to get some kind of bill passed to abolish the poll tax which disfranchises six million white and four million Negro people in the South. And they are getting no more help from the New Deal Democrats or the Republicans on this issue than on the anti-lynch bill. As on the anti-lynch measure, it is necessary to get half of the House to sign a discharge petition in order to obtain a vote on this bill.

Some columnists in the capitalist press — and in the Negro papers too, it must be admitted — delight in quoting figures to show how much "progress" the Negro has made since the Emancipation Proclamation. But so far as lynching and voting goes, the Negro is on the same old merry-go-round, with most of the progress necessary for equal rights still to come.

* * *

One of the favorite topics of the aforementioned columnists is education. They never tire of telling about the progress being made in this sphere. A good sign of the true situation, however, was provided by the Workers Defense League last week, when it quoted from the Journal of the National Education Association to show that more than half of the 61,000 Negro teachers in the segregated Jim Crow schools are receiving less than $600 a year. Other appropriations for education of Negroes in the South, where most Negroes live, are proportionately low. God help the Negroes who are satisfied with this kind of progress!

* * *

A friend in Louisiana this week sent us a newspaper advertisement illustrating the progress that has been made in the South in the fields of justice and politics. The voters of East Baton Rouge Parish were to elect a district judge on March 23, and one of the candidates, named Womack, advertised for votes on the ground that his opponent had been guilty of only fining a Negro $5 for hitting a white boy who had demanded that the Negro give him his seat in a bus. Womack proudly boasted of the fact that in such cases he has always imposed the most severe sentence possible under the law, six months in jail, and asked: "Which one of these men do you want to protect your rights, your home and your family in these perilous times?"

* * *

Twenty-five years after the first "war for democracy" and in the middle of the second year of the second "war for democracy," the government is still playing around with the question of employment discrimination against the Negro. Two months after McNutt called off the the railroad hearings and six weeks after Roosevelt promised they would be held, the two of them, assisted by Biddle, are still trying to determine the fate of the Fair Employment Practices Committee, are still trying to work out some formula that will quiet Negro discontent and yet satisfy the poll tax Congressmen.

If this is progress, protect us from it!

* * *

After the Civil War the government at least protected some of the rights of the Negro, even if only for a few years. But today the government itself sets the pattern of discrimination and segregation, as was once again shown last week in a statement by Judge William H. Hastie, who resigned last month as civilian aide to the Secretary of War because of Jim Crow in the air forces.

The Army Air Forces have decided to give soldiers five months of academic training in selected colleges before they begin army flying training. The men will be taught physics, mathematics, history, English and geography by college faculties and will live on the college campus. But, Hastie now charges, all Negroes eligible for the program will be segregated and sent to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama even though many of the colleges selected for the program do not deny admission to Negro students.

* * *

What is the purpose of all the talk we hear about "progress"? It is intended to make the Negroes think that gradually, as time goes by, things will get better and better, even if the Negro struggle for equality is discontinued or suspended. But this is a lie, and a mighty dangerous one. If Negroes were to fall for it, all progress — real or imaginary — would come to an abrupt halt. What Negroes need now is not fairy tales, or admonitions to believe these fairy tales, but fighting organizations and a fighting program to achieve equality now. Pie in the sky is no substitute for a square meal.

Polish Refugee Offices Are Abolished In Soviet Union

By JUDITH JANOW

It has been learned here that the relief offices maintained by the Polish embassy in Kuibyshev, USSR, have been closed by order of the Soviet authorities on the pretext that they harbored spies. This latest move, coming on the heels of the announcement of the execution of the two Jewish-Polish socialist leaders, Erlich and Alter is doubtless part of the diplomatic struggle over the eastern provinces of former Poland, occupied by Stalin in 1939 and lost to Germany in 1941.

The Polish relief offices were set up in Kuibyshev soon after conclusion of a special agreement between the Polish and Soviet governments for immediate help to Polish refugees in Russia. It thus gave legal recognition to the horrible fact that the hundreds of thousands of Polish refugees who fled into Russia before the advancing German troops or who were evacuated by the Russians, were perishing of cold and hunger in the Siberian wastes.

TREATMENT OF REFUGEES

These refugees—for the most part Jewish women and children —were treated by the Stalin government as so much human offal. They were shipped in unheated box cars to the remotest sections of the country, many to the Siberian tundra to fell wood or perform other hard labor; thousands were imprisoned or thrown into concentration camps. Without clothing, without any provision for shelter, without medicines, defenseless and alone, the refugees died like flies.

With the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement in September, 1941, thousands of refugees were released from jails and concentration camps. There started a slow trek on foot from remote parts of Russia southward. Food and clothing were allowed to be shipped to Russia duty-free for distribution through the Polish Embassy. The lion's share of relief, however, went to men of military age who were quickly whipped into Polish battalions and shipped to Teheran, to Palestine and to the Far East. The civilians got but little of this help.

DISCRIMINATION ON BOTH SIDES

From time to time accusations have been heard that the Poles discriminate against the Jewish Polish refugees in the distribution of relief. The Polish Government-in-Exile represents essentially the same reactionary, anti-Semitic clique that ruled Poland before the war, so it would not be surprising if this was true.

The dire plight of the Jewish refugees was increased, a few months after the signing of the Soviet-Polish agreement, by a Soviet government order exempting a majority of the Jews from the privilege of receiving relief or duty-free packages from their relatives abroad. This was done on the grounds that most of the Jewish-Polish refugees came from Eastern provinces occupied by Russia in 1941, and thus were not recognized by the Soviet government as citizens of Poland.

While this was clearly a diplomatic move laying the foundations for later Russian claims to these parts, its immediate effect was to deprive the Jewish refugees of any benefits under the Polish-Soviet agreement. Moreover, the Soviet government did not hasten to bestow on these unfortunates the "benefits" of Soviet citizenship—it denies them all right to work, continues to keep them at forced labor in utter destitution and misery. The lot of the Jewish-Polish refugees in Russia beggars description.

With the closing of the Polish relief offices, a new blow is delivered to Polish refugees in Russia and relations between the two governments enter a new stage of open hostility and rivalry.

4TH INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT ON MURDER OF ERLICH-ALTER

The Militant *has received the following statement by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International (World Party of Socialist Revolution):*

Stalin's murder of Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, leaders of the Jewish Workers League (Bund) of Poland, is a blow delivered by the Stalinist bureaucracy against the defense of the Soviet Union and the international struggle of the toilers to destroy fascism and capitalism.

In their slanderous assertion that Alter and Erlich, left-wing Social Democrats and political adversaries of the Fourth International, called for peace with Hitler and were agents of Hitler, the Stalinists are merely continuing the frameup pattern laid down in the Moscow trials and in the assassination of Leon Trotsky by the GPU.

EFFECTS OF STALINISM

Stalin, by all his reactionary acts, tends to alienate the workers from the defense of the Soviet Union, gives weapons to the bourgeoisie in their efforts to dominate the minds of the workers and tends to repel the oppressed people of Hitler-occupied Europe, including the workers of Germany, from the Soviet Union. Stalin's reactionary work would result, were he successful, in transforming the Soviet Union from an inspiration to the oppressed of the world into an object of loathing.

But he must not, and shall not, succeed! The revolutionary workers will continue to distinguish between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Soviet Union, product of the great Workers Revolution of 1917, lead by Lenin and Trotsky. The Russian revolution continues to live, in spite of the Stalinist degeneration, in the nationalized economy which arose out of that anti-capitalist revolution. The revolutionary workers, in firm political opposition to Stalin, will continue to defend the Soviet Union against any and all attacks.

BOLSHEVISM VS STALINISM

Many reformist Social Democratic leaders, their boldness restrained only by the diplomatic needs of the capitalist governments they serve, are utilizing this latest atrocity of Stalin to again identify Stalinism with Bolshevism, the Stalinist bureaucracy with the Soviet Union.

The workers must not permit themselves to be confused by these opportunist leaders. Stalinism and Leninism are deadly opponents. Bolshevism lives in the Fourth International, founded by Leon Trotsky, persecuted by Stalin. Not Bolshevism, but capitalism and its Social Democratic agents, bear the historic responsibility for Stalin.

These class-collaborationist Social Democratic leaders, by their support of capitalism since World War I, have up to now — with the aid of Stalinism since 1924 — been able to save the capitalist system outside of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was isolated and this isolation created the conditions for the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy. By pointing at Stalin's crimes, the Social Democratic leaders are merely trying to divert attention from their own.

AGAINST STALINISM — FOR DEFENSE OF USSR

The workers must not permit themselves to turn from the Soviet Union as a result of Stalin's great crimes. The foundations of the Soviet Union in the form of the nationalized property still remain. The Soviet Union still arouses the class hatred of world capitalism. The Soviet Union, based on nationalized property, must be defended against any and all imperialist attacks.

While firmly defending the Soviet Union, the revolutionary workers must continue to battle against the Stalinist influence in the ranks of the workers, within and without the Soviet Union, preparing the stage for the uprooting of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the victory of world socialism.

March, 2, 1943.

Shachtman Still Evades The Fundamental Issues

By FELIX MORROW

The Feb. 27 *Militant* had a news-item on a speech I had made, "The Class Meaning of the Soviet Victories." In a few lines the reporter tried to summarize a speech which had lasted an hour and a half. The reporter over-simplified; particularly he failed to indicate that by the "class meaning" — the main point of my speech — I meant above all the capitalist reaction to the Soviet victories.

However, the next issue of *The Militant* carried the announcement of the appearance in the March *Fourth International* of my article, with the same title as my speech, embodying the main point of that speech. Any honest reader, then, could read that 7,000-word article and get the full elaboration of my position.

Any honest reader—but not Max Shachtman. We have long been awaiting his review of our position on the Soviet Union; that position appears in its most rounded form in Leon Trotsky's "In Defense of Marxism—Against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition," which was published in book form months ago. In that book Schachtman's name appears many times, in connection with some extremely unflattering statements by Trotsky concerning Shachtman's analysis of the Russian question. Yet so far Shachtman has firmly resisted the obvious-enough idea that he should review that book. Shachtman appears to believe that discretion is the better part of valor, and that speech is silver but silence is golden. And that is so in his case.

REVIEW — OF A NEWS ITEM

Instead of reviewing Trotsky's book, or even my article, Shachtman offers his followers the shoddy substitute of reviewing the *news-item* about my speech! In the March 15 issue of his *Labor Action* —that is, after he must have known already of the appearance of my article—he writes a piece about the news-item, but six times longer. At least, one might think, at last he tells us what the Soviet Union is—so far he has only told us what it is not. But no. His article reads us a lecture on what Trotsky's position *really* was, but which he, Shachtman, does not agree with.

The best commentary on Shachtman's piece is the box in the middle of it announcing, "We regret that lack of space makes it impossible for us to comment in this issue on the growing tension over imperialist spoils between Stalin and other members of the United Nations. . . In a coming issue Max Shachtman will discuss this highly important question." Since then another issue of his paper appeared, but still no discussion of this "highly important question." Ever since the Stalingrad victory the entire press—bourgeois, Stalinist, ours, etc.—has been preoccupied with this question. But the months pass, and not a peep out of Shachtman.

Now that the Soviet reverses in the South have temporarily abated the press discussion of this question, no doubt Shachtman is breathing easier. He knows that the line he is committed to—characterization of the issue as a quarrel on the part of the Soviet Union over "imperialist spoils"—can be said in a box regretting his failure to write on it, but will not do so well in a full-length article. But events will pose this question to him again, and he will choke on it.

As for the outright forgeries, not to speak of deliberate misinterpretations, which Shachtman commits on Trotsky's position in his Feb. 27 piece, I shall deal with them at more length in the *Fourth International*.

Giraud Denies Vote to Both the Jews and Arabs

(Continued from page 1)

ists dare not enfranchise the 7,000,000 oppressed Arabs in Algeria. The 980,000 Frenchmen would be completely out-voted by the native population which aspires to independence.

The Algerian Arabs are predominantly a peasant people. They were driven off the fertile coastal lands by the French imperialists, and have had to eke out a starving existence on the non-arable lands.

ARAB AND JEW

Although French imperialism is the chief exploiter, the majority of the Arab masses come into contact with the exploiter mainly through the middlemen, the shop keepers, small businessmen, etc., who are often Jews. In the eyes of the Arabs, therefore, the Jews cannot but appear as agents of French imperialism. This *economic* antagonism, not racial or religious questions, is the issue between Arab and Jew.

The Hitlerite scape-goat — the Vichy anti-Semitic laws — are thus revoked, only to be replaced by a "democratic" Jewish scape-goat — mollifying the Arabs through repeal of the French citizenship of the Algerian Jews.

Lest the Jews of America and elsewhere complain, Giraud's spokesmen warn them that the Arabs would treat the Jews still worse.

The obvious way of mollifying the Arabs would be to give them citizenship as well as to retain the citizenship of the Jews. But that way is closed by the interests of imperialist domination in North Africa.

Giraud's action against the Jews clearly shows the nature of his "democracy" and that of his American and British backers. It is also a preview of the treatment the Jews are going to get in the future from the "democracies" in the rest of the world—unless the masses first replace imperialism with socialism.

The U. S. Beveridge Plan Its Meaning And Future

By M. Morrison

The two reports of the National Resources Planning Board, submitted to Congress by President Roosevelt, will serve the liberal democrats as an answer to the question uppermost in the minds of millions of people as they work and fight and suffer. This question is: what are we fighting for? From now on the answer to the question will be that we are fighting not only for the four freedoms (which evidently were a little too general to satisfy the masses) but also for the right to work and for social security and for a better world if and when victory is achieved.

I do not mean to say that in having the plans prepared Roosevelt did so simply for the purpose of being able to give the masses an idea as to the meaning of the war. In fact the report on social insurance was prepared prior to the outbreak of the war. It can be readily admitted that the basic purpose of Roosevelt in having the plans prepared is to solve the problems confronting capitalist society. This does not detract from the fact that the reports will be used for many other purposes, the main one being to give the masses an ideal to fight for, to give them some hope and encouragement that after victory is won they will not return to a world without jobs and without security.

And, as John L. Lewis has suggested, the reports can very well be used to divert the attention of the masses from their demands for an immediate raise in their wages.

* * *

Insofar as its social insurance provisions are concerned, the plan submitted by the NRPB is quite similar to the one submitted by Sir William Henry Beveridge to the British Parliament. It proposes a modification and extension of the present social insurance laws, without setting any definite standard of compensation for sickness, unemployment or old age. That is to be determined later.

The plan differs from the Beveridge one in that it formulates proposals about the necessity of participation of the government in private industry, of participation of labor in management and of large-scale government projects to take up any slack in employment that may occur in private industry.

* * *

The reports embody the hopes and dreams of the more intelligent section of the capitalist class for a solution of the problems that will confront capitalist society after the war. Roosevelt and all the New Dealers and liberals want the system of private enterprise to remain intact with the capitalists making a reasonable profit and with the workers having constant employment and earning a decent wage, with social insurance to take care of all untoward eventualities. The vision is of a capitalist world where all classes of society live amidst peace and plenty.

That it is essential to have some plan to make capitalism function after the war is over is clear to everyone outside of the dumbest reactionary circles. The millions of men returning from the armed forces will not take kindly to looking for jobs and finding none, after having fought and suffered. Into the minds of the masses there will penetrate the simple but all-powerful idea that if the government can spend billions of dollars to make war, it can and should do the same to give everyone a job. And if the government should fail to take the measures necessary to provide jobs for everybody, it will become all too clear that capitalism can give people work only for destruction and death.

It is only an ignoramus like Rickenbacker who can convince himself and try to convince others that the soldiers are fighting for rugged individualism. The truth is that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, they are fighting because they have to fight. They are not fighting for Roosevelt's democracy, nor for Rickenbacker's rugged individualism.

But this is true: when they return they will want jobs and wages, and woe to the social system that cannot provide them with jobs and wages. Roosevelt understands that; Rickenbacker and those whom he represents do not. That is why Roosevelt wants a plan, at least for the purpose of giving the masses hope.

* * *

To a Marxist who understands that it is the profit motive that makes capitalism function, the idea that one can furnish jobs and security to everybody by limiting the extent of profits is indeed utopian. Quite possibly some of the recommendations of the Planning Board can help to a certain extent. It proposes a gradual demobilization of the armed forces after the war in order to give industry a chance to absorb all the returned soldiers. That is of course better than to throw all the soldiers on the labor market at one time. But as is usually the case with plans to make capitalism function, this idea, in solving one problem, succeeds in creating another. To demobilize the armed soldiers gradually means to continue spending enormous sums for their upkeep, thus creating a financial strain.

It may well be that the demand for durable consumers' goods, the production of which had to be curtailed for war purposes, will bring some spurt to industry. But there can be no plan for the employment of all the returned soldiers and all the workers now employed in war industry that can possibly be effective other than a plan based on the idea of utilizing all the productive forces for the welfare of the people. Such a plan is impossible under capitalism.

* * *

The likelihood is very great that the reactionary sections of the capitalist class will succeed in preventing the adoption of the plan or in whittling it down to a point where it will be unrecognizable. The present Congress is in control of people who have Rickenbacker's ideas and not Roosevelt's, and the probability is that the reactionary trend of the capitalist class will continue. There is no reason to expect otherwise.

The reactionary character of the present Congress is in itself conclusive proof of the futility of attempting a gradual modification and reform of capitalism so as to provide the masses with livable conditions. Here we have Roosevelt, the reformer, in power for ten years and in spite of that the reactionaries gain control of Congress. Why? The basic reason is that Roosevelt's inability to solve the problems of society by means of his reforms disheartens some sections of the population and irritates others. As a result, since there is no party of labor, offering the masses a program that they would fight for, the reactionaries gain.

It is a law that in the period of the decline of capitalism any attempt to reform it is doomed to failure. With the consequence that the middle class, irritated by the failure of the reform parties to solve any basic problem, swings to the support of the reactionary forces. The Social-Democrats of Germany proved this; Leon Blum, in France, proved it. The Social-Democrats of Spain proved it. The American workers should learn from these historic lessons.

* * *

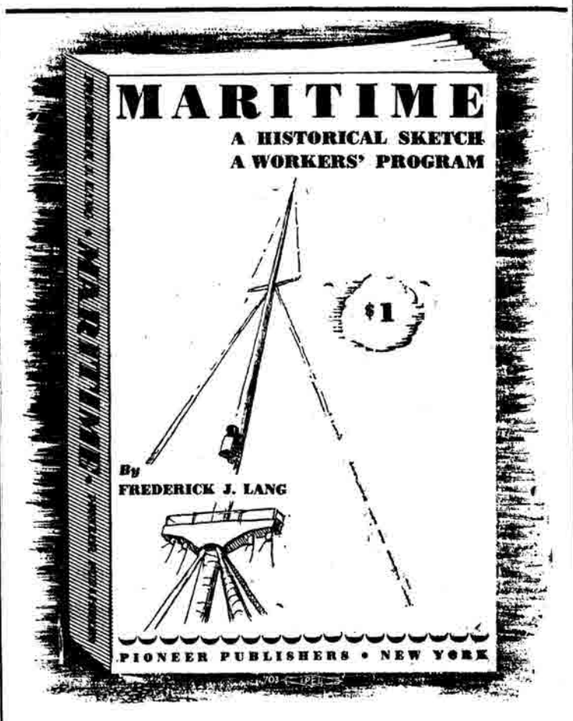
The task of revolutionary Marxists is not simply to attack the reports because their recommendations, even if accepted, are totally insufficient to solve the problems confronting the masses. That would be an approach too abstract to be effective. Nor is it sufficient to criticize it in the manner of John L. Lewis, who declared the proposals to be utopian and intended to divert the attention of the masses from the necessity for an immediate and substantial raise in their wages.

Both assertions are true but it is insufficient to stop there. The fact remains that the masses want jobs and are justifiably fearful that they won't have any after the war. The fact remains that the masses want security and want it badly. The very fact that Roosevelt has his board come out with the reports constitutes a recognition of the deep concern the masses have with the problem of security.

Revolutionary Marxists will support Lewis's struggle for a raise in the miners' wages. But they will also stress the necessity of jobs and security and the need for a program to give jobs and security. The essence of that program must be the taking over of all major industries by the government and their operation under workers' control. It is this which alone will constitute a first major step in bringing jobs and security to the people.

If Lewis were to say that the masses cannot and should not rely on Roosevelt and the Democratic Party to bring jobs and security but should organize a Labor Party for that purpose, he would be hitting the nail right on the head.

A NEW BOOK



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THE MILITANT

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To defend the USSR as the main fortress of the world proletariat, against all assaults of world imperialism and of internal counter-revolution, is the most important duty of every class-conscious worker.

— LEON TROTSKY

JOIN US IN FIGHTING FOR:

1. **Military training of workers, financed by the government, but under control of the trade unions. Special officers' training camps, financed by the government but controlled by the trade unions, to train workers to become officers.**
2. **Trade union wages for all workers drafted into the army.**
3. **Full equality for Negroes in the armed forces and the war industries—Down with Jim Crowism everywhere.**
4. **Confiscation of all war profits. Expropriation of all war industries and their operation under workers' control.**
5. **For a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living.**
6. **Workers Defense Guards against vigilante and fascist attacks.**
7. **An Independent Labor Party based on the Trade Unions.**
8. **A Workers' and Farmers' Government.**
9. **Defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attack.**

Churchill's Speech

Winston Churchill began his radio speech on the post-war world last Sunday by deriding those who make promises which cannot be kept. He then went on to promise that he would make no such promises because he did not know what the situation would be when the time came for fulfilling them, because he might not even be in office then.

It must be remembered that Churchill has always been most reluctant to discuss war aims and the post-war world. If he does so now, it is because the masses of Great Britain are becoming increasingly determined not to return to the world of depression and hunger in which they lived before the war. Churchill must speak on the question now because the masses are embittered and aroused by his government's refusal to take practical steps on even the Beveridge social-security plan.

Churchill more or less kept his word. Instead of promises, he offered the masses hopes. The hope that they will have social security and be able to avoid a catastrophic depression — even though the capitalist system responsible for insecurity and depression will be maintained, if Churchill has anything to say about it. The hope that they will have lasting peace and be able to enjoy the benefits of international cooperation — without the removal of the cause of war and nationalism, the capitalist system which breeds economic and political rivalries. The hope that the educational system will be improved, that children will have milk, that mothers will have more babies, that farmers will produce more crops, that equal opportunity will be extended to all — all these and many more Churchill lavishly offered the British people last Sunday.

Perhaps Churchill acted wisely in not making any promises. Some of the capitalist papers in this country think perhaps he sensed that the masses are getting sick and tired of promises and he hoped to regain his political influence among them by presenting himself as a realistic and honest man when compared with the liberal fakers. In addition, many British workers have not forgotten that Churchill promised independence to India when the British Empire in the Far East was in dire straits, and that he withdrew his promise when the Empire's fortunes took a turn for the better; they realize that a Churchill promise to the British people, given in a time of crisis, can similarly be withdrawn when the crisis is temporarily surmounted; so perhaps Churchill stood to gain by not making promises.

But a hope is no more digestible or nutritious than a promise. Churchill's speech demonstrated that he and his class have nothing to offer humanity just as the Tory government's action on the Beveridge plan showed that they stand as an obstacle to even the most modest reforms. The hope of a better world can be realized only by sweeping this obstacle aside.

Foremen And Unions

On March 18, the General Motors Corporation sent a telegram to four administration departments demanding that the government ban the unionization of foremen and lower managerial employees.

The cry for governmental aid fell on ears by no means unsympathetic to the corporations' plight. Representative Smith of Virginia, responding to his master's voice, immediately introduced a bill which would forbid employers from dealing with unions which admitted supervisory personnel to membership.

Why this plea to the government? What is the significance of the widespread interest in organization among foremen?

In its earlier periods, when capitalism was marked by smaller aggregates of capital, the owner and the manager were one and the same person. Since the establishment of large-scale corporation capitalism, there has been a division between the functions of ownership and management. While the stockholders own the corporation, clip coupons representing profits and are complete parasites, the actual management of the plants is in the hands of the corporation officials.

The higher groups of corporation officers are part and parcel of the owning groups. They receive large salaries, plus bonuses, derived from the exploitation of the workers and are usually themselves large stockholders.

The lower strata of corporation management is in a different position. They do not have the intimate connections with the owners of the corporations that the top officials have. Their salaries are but a small fraction of those received by the upper officials. They are also in close contact with the workers.

Prior to the great wave of union organization, the lower foremen were willing servants of the corporations and fell under the domination of the capitalist class.

But a change has taken place. In the face of rising living costs, foremen's salaries remain far behind. They have to work long hours of overtime, often with little or no overtime pay. The job of enforcing the policies of the corporations on the workers is no longer an easy one. The workers, feeling the power of organization, are no longer the weak, unprotected, disunited and servile mass of yesterday.

Caught between the two fires of organized capital and organized labor, the foremen and sub-foremen are quite understandably attracted to the idea of organization and a possible alliance with the labor movement. They have seen the unions make forward strides and improve the wages and conditions of their members, and they would like to achieve the same results for themselves by organization.

The shakiness and instability of the capitalist structure is demonstrated by the fact that such industrial and financial giants as Ford, General Motors, the great coal operators, etc., can no longer hold the loyalty and support by their own authority of the lower ranks of their own managerial personnel and must call upon the government to intervene and maintain "discipline" and authority for them in the shops.

The controversy over the foreman illustrates also that labor can become the leader of the whole people if only it has the program and the courage to lead.

Pioneer's New Book

Pioneer Publishers, dedicated to the publication of Marxist works to arm the fighters for socialism, has done it again — for the third time in three months.

First, around the beginning of the year, it published the 240 page book by Leon Trotsky, "In Defense of Marxism," which has already secured for itself a lasting place in the list of Marxist classics.

Second, Pioneer issued the popular 32-page pamphlet by C. Charles, "Your Standard of Living," which analyses the problems of rising prices, frozen wages, black markets, food shortages, etc., and points the way toward their solution by working class action.

And now comes another book, "Maritime," a history of the industry and a program for seafaring workers, the first detailed Marxist study of the structure and problems of the martime industry and the relation of the government to the shipowners and the maritime workers. (See review elsewhere on this page.) By the publication of this 182-page book, selling at the low price of $1, Pioneer has rendered a genuine service not only to the militant seamen but to the entire American working class.

Pioneer Publishers, we are informed, has plans to bring out many other works of a theoretical nature, to serve the practical and theoretical needs of the class-conscious workers. The way to further Pioneer's publishing plans is by giving its latest works the distribution they deserve.

WORKERS' FORUM

The columns are open to the opinions of the readers of The Militant. *Letters are welcome on any subject of interest to the workers, but keep them short and include your name and address. Indicate if you do not want your name printed. — Editor.*

Sends Funds to Aid Post Office Fight

Editor:

Because I believe it is increasingly important to present the imperialist nature of the present war, a character becoming more and more clear, I am enclosing a contribution to be used in your court battle against the Post Office decision barring *The Militant* from the second-class mails.

Layle Lane.
New York City

Discusses the Mine Negotiations

Editor:

John Bates' article on the miners in the March 13 issue of your paper is completely inadequate in at least one respect. The article made reference to an "ace in the hole" that the government has—to stretch the work week to six days for the miners and thus give them a larger wage income. This trick is so outlived at present that it has been completely forgotten and not even referred to by either the coal operators or the miners in the present negotiations.

The fact is that the miners have now for some time been working the six-day week. The operators on the basis of this have received permission from the government to raise the price of coal. Only about one-third of this price rise has been passed on to the miners in the form of the extra half-time for the sixth day.

In presenting the demands of the miners to the coal operators at the Appalachian joint conference, John L. Lewis said, "The coal miners are hungry. They are ill-fed and undernourished. When the mine workers' children cry for bread, they cannot be satisfied with the 'Little Steel formula.' He also cited statistics from coal towns showing a 124.6% rise in food costs since 1939.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* sent one of its sob-sisters into a mining town to pretend to find the underfed children referred to by Lewis. Of course he couldn't find any; "not in want, miners say" was the conclusion drawn from his "investigation." But in the course of his article he cited a miner's bi-weekly payroll statement.

After the listed deductions of the various taxes, insurance and doctor's fees, union dues, etc., and "assignments" to the company store, the mine worker has exactly $5.50 left out his two week wage of $92.40. His war bond deduction was $2.50. He couldn't give 10% toward war bonds even if he wanted to.

In my opinion the fight of the miners' union at present is the most critical issue that has yet confronted the Roosevelt administration and its "New Deal" labor policies. Up to now Roosevelt has paraded as a "friend of labor," dropping a crumb here and there and succeeding for the most part in keeping the workers under that illusion. But it would require some super kind of conniving for him to extricate himself from the present situation without shedding his mask.

I would like to see this subject given some more attention in your paper.

James Cook
Harrisburg, Pa.

Explains Why Unions Should Act Now

Editor:

Now that practically all the workers have felt what it means to pay stiff income taxes, and now that the House of Representatives has shown where it stands by voting to repeal the limit on salaries over $25,000 a year, I think it is about time for the unions to get together to put an end to this "Little Steel" formula that prevents us from getting any wage increases. . .

Right now, while Congress is making plans to raise taxes even higher, and while it is considering bills to strangle the unions if they want to fight for better conditions, is the time for us to act.

If we wait much longer, a lot of the workers are going to become demoralized and decide that the unions aren't worth anything in war time. When that happens, then the employers will really try to go to town on us.

Packinghouse Worker,
Chicago, Ill.

Workers' BOOKSHELF

MARITIME, A Historical Sketch and a Workers' Program, by Frederick J. Lang. Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York City, March, 1943. 182 pages, $1.

Every seaman concerned about the well-being and the future of the maritime unions in the face of the present aggressive drive to stamp them out of existence will be interested in this latest publication of Pioneer Publishers. Written by a seaman who has evidently long made the forecastle his home, the book displays on every page intimate first-hand knowledge of day-to-day problems aboard ship as well as the more general issues faced by the unions in their long struggle against predatory shipowning interests.

Lang's analysis is thoroughgoing. Basing himself on the Marxist theory of economics and politics he bares the fundamental relation of the maritime industry to American economy. This industry, he shows, occupies a vitally strategic position. **In the titanic struggle of contending imperialisms for domination of the world, which characterizes our epoch, ships link the home base with the advance forces, whether they be the house flags of shipping companies in the periods when hostilities are suspended and rivalries limited to the economic sphere, or the national flag when armed conflict is resumed.**

Because of this vitally strategic character of the maritime industry — especially in utilizing sea lanes to bind together a world empire — each of the major powers attempts to maintain a merchant fleet under its own control. The fact that the combined merchant fleets of the world exceed the amount required to handle world trade makes it necessary to subsidize the private shipping companies, that is, guarantee them profits out of the public treasury.

Graft and Government Policy

Lang's revelations of shipping company piracy in the way of subsidies, graft and profits should enliven many a dull hour in the forecastles of the American merchant marine. Lang has searched diligently through obscure documents and well-buried public records to assemble irrefutable facts describing how the strings of the public purse were turned over to the shipowners. American seamen, struggling to maintain their bonus rates and union contracts under war conditions and now confronted with paying an unprecedented income tax in the face of skyrocketing living costs, will undoubtedly appreciate this section of the book revealing the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of dollars poured into the pockets of shipowners by generous government officials.

Of great service to seamen concerned with spreading unionism is Lang's analysis of the government's attitude toward the shipowners on the one hand and the men who work the ships on the other. Lang outlines the history of government paternalism toward the shipowners, showing how the government of Big Business always displays the greatest solicitude for the interests of the shipowners no matter how badly they mismanage the industry or how greedily they rake in profits. In contrast to this touching concern for the wealthy shipowners, Lang shows that in its relations with underpaid seamen the government of Big Business in every crucial instance cracks down brutally. Union men desirous of acquainting new comers to the industry with the history of government strike-breaking following World War I will find the facts handled graphically and compactly in this book.

A long felt need among militant seamen has been a brief authoritative history of the maritime unions. Lang's book meets this need. He describes how followers of Karl Marx, members of the First International, organized in 1885 on the West Coast the union which was to become the powerful Sailors Union of the Pacific. Following those early days, Lang records Andrew Furuseth's great contributions in ending medieval laws that enslaved seamen and in extending the union brotherhood of the sea.

History of Maritime Labor

From the end of the progressive period of Furuseth's International Seaman's Union, Lang outlines the contributions of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), showing how their militancy and spirit of self-sacrifice became a part of the tradition of maritime unionism, but how in turn after Furuseth the IWW proved incapable of meeting the political problems which world war, world wide depression and fascism have placed before modern unionism.

The role of Stalinism in the maritime field likewise receives careful attention. Lang offers an abundance of facts and quotations from the well-known representatives of Stalinist views in maritime labor to prove his thesis that since the days of Lenin and Trotsky the Communist Party has degenerated into a mere instrument of Stalin's foreign policy which in the maritime field as elsewhere subordinates the general interests of the working class to the temporary needs and requirements of the Moscow bureaucracy.

With the resurgence of the maritime unions in the 1934 and 1936-37 strikes and the organization of the east coast in the National Maritime Union and Seafarers International Union, maritime labor gained the strongest positions in its history. But it likewise faces an unparalleled anti-union drive with the administration riding hard in the saddle for the shipowners. One of the most worthwhile parts of Lang's book is its closing chapter suggesting a feasible solution, a program of action that can bring the unions out of the present impasse.

A Program for Seamen

This program of action — the program proposed by the Socialist Workers Party — should prove of interest to American labor in other fields besides maritime. It proposes specific measures such as setting up workers' control over the present irresponsible managers of the shipping industry through committees of workers elected to check the books of the companies, to determine whether their rate of profit is exorbitant or not, to expose their business secrets and shady deals — in brief to establish a responsible control over a vital public utility.

The aim of workers' control is the establishment of an efficient workers' management of the industry and the outright expropriation of the parasitic shipowners.

To achieve this end, however, the program calls for independent political action, an end to company unionism in politics which leaves Big Business free to shape the government and government policies to suit their private interests.

Maritime, a Historical Sketch and a Workers Program, we feel confident, will prove popular not only among workers on the deep sea and inland waters, but in landlocked industries as well.

Reviewed by Joseph Hansen.

What Others Say About P. O. Attack On 'Militant'

NEW REPUBLIC

Last week we re-printed the comment of various labor and liberal papers and organizations on the Post Office order revoking The Militant's *second-class mailing privileges. All of them with but one exception, protested against the Post Office: the Workers Defense League, the Civil Rights Defense Committee,* The Nation, The New Leader, *and* Labor Action. *The exception was the Stalinist* Morning Freiheit. *This week we print other comment:*

In an editorial entitled **"The Three Freedoms,"** the March 15 issue of the **New Republic** condemns the Post Office attack on **The Militant** and says:

"To us this virtual suppression of a paper which . . .could never be accused of the slightest sympathy for Hitlerism, contains disturbing implications for the future of free speech in this war. If newspapers can be barred from the mails because, among other things, they accuse the United States of collaborating with the fascists. . . then surely we may as well abandon all pretense of enjoying at least one of the Four Freedoms as long as the war lasts."

THE PROGRESSIVE

Sharp criticism of the Post Office order cancelling the second-class mail rights of **The Militant** was voiced in an editorial column of the March 22 issue of **The Progressive,** the La Follette weekly published in Madison, Wis.

". . .the Post Office Department's order strikes us as a shady and dangerous interference with freedom of expression in the midst of a war ostensibly being fought for, among other goals, the right of all people 'everywhere in the world' to write and speak freely without fear of government reprisal," said the article.

Noting that the order was put over "with the connivance of Attorney General Francis Biddle," the article discusses some of the "crimes" with which **The Militant** was charged, and says:

" 'Charges of fascist collaboration' have been spread all over the pages of publications which are otherwise strongly pro-Roosevelt. If by 'stimulation of race issues' the Attorney General means published attacks on the glaring discrimination against Negroes, he will have to bear down on nearly all of the liberal and radical press of America. . .

"Certainly the action of the Post Office and Justice Departments makes a mockery of the government's claim that it will tamper with free speech only where there is a 'clear and present danger' to the conduct of the war."

WEEKLY PEOPLE

"On February 25, the same Attorney General who advised action against **The Militant** told the annual Judicial Circuit Conference that the fear widely held that civil liberties would be encroached upon had 'almost disappeared.' If this fear had 'almost disappeared,' the decision of the Postmaster General (in the case of **The Militant**) should serve to revive the fear," says an editorial in the March 20 issue of **Weekly People,** organ of the Socialist Labor Party.

Demonstration By M. P.'s Is a Warning to Labor

Last week a battalion of military police at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, put on an "anti-riot" demonstration. According to the *St. Paul Dispatch* of March 17, it was "one of the few public displays of tactics of the highly-trained military police of the United States Army of World War II."

The public demonstration got a lot of advance publicity in the press; Army observers came to Snelling from all parts of the country. The scene of the demonstration was a mythical "Bear Cat Ammunition Co." The military police who played the role of the "rioters" carried "agitator signs" and banners reading "Strike" and "More Pay, Less Hours," and "yelled like an infuriated mob."

They were "charged" by another group of military police, in a wedge-shaped formation, bayonets outthrust, followed by an armored car and more soldiers. Needless to say, the "rioters" were subdued, and the demonstration was declared to be a success.

A delegation of union leaders from the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly called on the Army officer in charge to protest. They said nothing about the obvious fact: that the demonstration proved the soldiers were being trained for anti-labor purposes. Instead, they complained that the public would get the "wrong impression" that war workers were striking. They declared that Japanese prisoners, and not war workers, should have been used as the "rioters." This is known as swallowing the camel and straining at a gnat.

SUNDAY OPEN FORUM

This Week: SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 8 P. M.

"THE CIVIL WAR IN YUGOSLAVIA"

Speaker: JOHN G. WRIGHT

●

Next Week: SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 8 P. M.

"John L. Lewis and Roosevelt's Labor Policy"

Speaker: E. R. FRANK

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